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Canada

The Kosher Food Market in Canada 1999

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Report Highlights:

Ninety percent of Canada's total Jewish population, currently estimated at 352,000, is concentrated in the country's four major metropolitan centers. Total Canadian packaged kosher food sales annually exceed an estimated C\$5.0 million. Successful exporters of U.S. kosher foods commonly deal directly with Canadian kosher food distributors and retailers.

Includes PSD changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
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Canada's Kosher Food Industry and Markets

Scope of Market

Canada's kosher food market is vibrant but relatively small in comparison with mainstream food marketing. The most recent census data (1996) from Statistics Canada shows the number of Canadians who reported their religion as Jewish was 352,000. The current estimate of Muslims in Canada is slightly above 400,000. However, the maximum market potential for kosher food in Canada is probably less than 800,000 since the percentage of persons following religious dietary laws is generally regarded to be less than 100 percent. Toronto and Montreal have the largest Jewish communities followed by Vancouver and Winnipeg. These four population centers are estimated to account for more than 90 percent of Canada's total Jewish population. A Nielsen Marketing Research survey of ethnic food sales in Canada conducted in 1993 showed that total sales of brand name products containing the word "kosher" as part of the brand name description, were estimated at \$C1.1 million. However, since the term kosher represents a manner of food production not always indicated in the brand name, post estimates that total Canadian packaged kosher food sales currently exceed \$C5.0 million.

Regulation and Marketing

In the labeling, packaging and advertising of a food, Canada's Food and Drug Regulations prohibit the use of the word kosher, or any letter of the Hebrew alphabet, or any other word, expression, depiction, sign, symbol, mark, device or other representation that indicates or that is likely to create an impression that the food is kosher, if the food does not meet the requirements of the Kashruth applicable to it.

The marketability of kosher products in Canada is enhanced if the products carry the symbols or labels approved by the local rabbinical authorities (Kashruth Councils). Similar to other specialty food markets, the Canada's kosher food market is chiefly driven by a network of businesses within the community. Best approaches for U.S. exporters to assess the Canadian kosher food market is through direct contact with distributors and retailers and the various local rabbinical councils and Jewish information centers (lists attached). The Kashruth Council of Toronto has published a directory to assist consumers who purchase kosher supervised products which lists the primary kosher food retailers in that city. Additional information is available from the Kashruth Council of Toronto office, telephone (416) 635-9550. In Montreal, the Jewish Business Network (JBN) is preparing a "Blue Book", or telephone directory of Montreal's Jewish businesses which is scheduled to be published in the fall of 1999. Interested exporters may call the JBN directly at (514) 844-5654 for further information.

Kosher Food Production

The major kosher food items produced by food manufacturers in Canada are fresh meats, packaged meats, dairy products, bakery products, and fish (especially salmon). In addition, the various Kashruth Councils provide the community with lists of suitable "brand name" foods produced by Canada's mainstream food processors. Canada also has a small number of meat and poultry processors who provide halal meat for the Muslim Community.

In addition to retail sales of fresh and packaged kosher foods, there is a trend in Canada to increased availability of kosher foods in the foodservice sector. The Jewish communities of most major cities offer consumers a wide variety of combination bakery/restaurant or delicatessen/restaurant aimed at kosher food diners. In the Toronto

area, several major hotels offer separate kosher kitchens for banquets and meetings. Other hotels, through special arrangement, will permit facilities to be used for kosher functions by a kosher caterer certified by the local Rabbinical Council.

Contact Information

Information Centers

Kashruth Council of Toronto
Rabbi Mordechai Levin, Director
4600 Bathurst Street, Suite 240
North York, Ontario M2R 3V2
tel: (416) 635-9550
fax: (416) 635-8760

tel: (416) 630-0303

Paradise Banquet Halls
tel: (416) 661-6612

Regal Constellation Hotel
tel: (416) 798-6426

Jewish Information Service for Montreal
Suzanne Hersovitch
tel: (514) 735-3541

Jewish Information Service for Vancouver
Janet Kolof
tel: (604) 257-5111

Winnipeg Jewish Community Council
tel: (204) 943-0406
fax: (204) 956-0609

Selected Toronto Hotels with Kosher Kitchen Facilities

Inn on the Park
tel: (416) 446-3328

Embassy Suites
tel: (905) 470-8500

Park Plaza
tel: (416) 924-5471

The Sheraton Center Hotel
tel: (416) 361-1000

Le Parc
tel: (416) 798-7246

Montecassino Suites Hotel

Chain Stores Selling Kosher or Halal

Knob Hill Farms Ltd
Scarborough, Ontario
tel: (416) 751-2300

Fortinos Supermarket Ltd.
Hamilton, Ontario
tel: (905) 389-9229

A&P of Canada Ltd.
Toronto, Ontario
tel: (416) 239-7171

The Oshawa Group Ltd.
Etobicoke, Ontario
tel: (416) 236-1971

Islamic Organizations

Canadian Office
The Islamic Society of North America
Toronto, Ontario
tel: (416) 977-2057

Selected List of Companies Who Manufacture or Distribute Approved Kosher Products

Allied Food Distributors Inc.
Montreal

Contact: Mr. Allan Winikoff
(514) 735-4425
fax: (514) 342-2123

Products: cookies, crackers, packaged products,
freeze dried foods

Astro Dairy Products
Etobicoke, Ontario
tel: (416) 622-2811

Atlantic Fish Specialties Ltd.
Charlottetown, PEI
tel: (902) 894-7005

CanAmera Foods,
Toronto, Ontario
tel: (905) 825-7900

Canbra Foods
Lethbridge, Alberta
tel: (403) 329-5500

Casrin International Inc.
North York
tel: (416) 748-9500

Chai Kosher Poultry Inc.,
Toronto, Ontario
tel: (416) 462-1313

Enroute Imports Inc.
Concord, Ontario
tel: (905) 738-8611

Hahamovitch Kosher
Montreal
Contact: Mr. Michael Zimman
tel: (514) 334-4750
fax: (514) 334-4385

Jerusalem Pita

Downsview, Ontario
tel: (416) 398-398-7900

Kofman Barenholtz Foods, Ltd.
Concord, Ontario
tel: (905) 669-5393
fax: (905) 669-5393
info @kofbar.com
Products: grocery, frozen foods, dairy products

Kwinter Packers Ltd.,
Toronto, Ontario
tel: (416) 243-3447

L&M Bakers Supply Co.
Downsview, Ontario
tel: (416) 665-3005

Lenchner Bakery Inc.
Concord, Ontario
tel: (905) 738-8811

Lieberman Splendid Chocolates
Toronto, Ontario
tel: (416) 782-6997

Marcee's Sweets
Toronto, Ontario
tel: (416) 694-5811

Marvin Poultry Packers Canada, Inc.
Montreal, Quebec
tel: (514) 321-8376
fax: (514) 329-4568

Middle East Nutritious Food Corp Haddad Bakery
Concord, Ontario
tel: (416) 661-2075

Smoked Fish Factory
Weston, Ontario
tel: (416) 745-4323

Stroli's Strictly Kosher Foods
Toronto, Ontario

tel: (416) 789-5333

Downsview, Ontario

tel: (416) 398-7900

Toronto Bagel Ltd.,

Websites:

Kosher Agencies

The Kashruth Council of Toronto publishes a list of establishments under the Council's supervision. The list includes bakeries, butcher shops, restaurants, delicatessen's and takeout services, kosher food stores and catering establishments and airline meal service companies. The web address is:

<http://www.koshermall.com/cor.htm>

Find Us on The Web:

Visit our headquarter's home page at <http://www.fas.usda.gov> for a complete selection of FAS' worldwide agricultural reporting.

FAS/Ottawa e-mail: usagr@istar.ca